

Beach Commission Minutes- Meeting of 9/13/2013

Attending: Rian Wilkinson, John Bagwill, Bill Seiple, Henry Pine, Dave Leys, Will Cronin, Chris Semonelli

1. Open meeting 4:30

2. Approve meeting of 6/11/13 – no changes

3. Beach Revenue- Will Cronin

Beach parking revenue - \$1,120,000.00- this is approximately 10% lower than 2012. (This is a seasonal report, May-Labor Day). Very poor June weather was the major factor. Inconsistent weather throughout the summer, large amounts of seaweed and bugs in the ocean also were contributing factors for the lower income. However, the state reported over a 20% loss- year over year- and the Beach Commission felt the town's 10% loss was not all that bad.

***** This total does not include concession fees, campground revenue, harbor master income of approximately \$290,000.00.**

4. Facility operations

- New dumpster compactor worked well and reduced rubbish removal fees.**
- Some problems with building bathrooms- town rented additional porta- johns to relieve the problem. The maintenance of thee units was very good.**
- Long lines at the showers due to seaweed.**
- Realigning the trailers and renting a smaller “counting trailer” was an improvement.**

*****Seaweed- Will Cronin**

There was large amounts of seaweed throughout the entire summer. It seemed to be a new type- very fine and, easily, spread by the constant southerly winds. It was the first time long time beach-goers can remember such a long term occurrence.

***Removal**

The town tried removing some, but it was costly and not effective. They removed several truckloads. 50+ tons, and it did not make a dent. It was difficult to harvest, because it rarely accumulated on the beach, unlike previous strains. Also, disposing of the seaweed was difficult because it mixed with the sand and was not useful as a fertilizer.

****A local company experimented with fine netting to trap the seaweed. Disposal and moving the weed would be major problems. The company will continue trying to come up with a method of trapping/ disposing the seaweed.**

*****Roger Williams University and University of Rhode Island are conducting studies on the seaweed, including discovering the origin and species. They will conduct studies throughout the fall and get back with the town with their findings.**

5. Third Beach- Will Cronin, Committee

The heavy seaweed and bugs , previously, had an effect on Third Beach attendance. Many beach patrons started going to Third, rather

than Second- filling both parking lots. The beach was more crowded, even on a daily basis, which caused some concern from town residents.

The entire operation of Third is going to be discussed at future meetings, but one suggestion that was brought forward concerned parking at the Navy parking lot. Several members felt that exclusive- Resident Only- parking should be allowed at the Navy parking lot. Bill Seiple notified the Beach Commission that this was the case several years ago, but was changed and all cars with a season pass were allowed to park in that lot.

Boat Ramp

Heavy sand accumulation made boat launching very difficult. The town cleared the ramp several times, but the sand returned within 24 hrs. Rian also said that for the first time, in recent history, that he saw heavy sand as far as the NFW out-flow- approximately 200 yards east from the ramp. Previously, this area was, almost, solid stone. This, also, had a related affect- the beach to the East..right.. was in excellent condition rather than rock filled. Swimmers chose to swim there, rather than the guarded area- West of the ramp.

6. Kite Surfing

Bill and Will will come up with an informative “flyer” showing the regulation dates and kite-surfing areas on Second and Third beaches.

It will be posted on path #1- Second Beach. Hopefully this will

eliminate the problems relating to kite-surfing and Sept swimming at the beaches.

New Business

***Chris Semonelli reported that the Career Day at Second Beach was successful and further activities should be planned**

**** Reserved Resident Parking- Chris Semonelli referred to letter concerning “reserved” resident spaces at Second Beach. This will be discussed at a later meeting.**

***** Contracted Lot Collection- Chris Semonelli and John Bagwill brought up the concept of contract parking- A contractor operates all lot collection sites and guarantees a specific income to the town- This will be discussed at a later meeting.**

Meeting adjourned 6:02pm.